



Bloggers Roundtable Articles

Safety Helps Derive Operational Readiness, Admiral Says

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WASHINGTON, May 27, 2008 – Safety is a “24/7” concern for the U.S. Navy and its operational readiness, the commander of the Naval Safety Center said in a May 23 teleconference with online journalists and bloggers.

“Our safety helps us derive our readiness,” Navy Rear Adm. Arthur Johnson said. “So, we are concerned about our personnel’s conduct 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year, because if someone fails to show up on Monday morning, then we have a mission impact. If someone’s not able to make that mission, we will suffer.”

Toward that end, the Navy has implemented several initiatives to increase the situational awareness. One is the Travel Risk Management Program, or TRiPS system. This system allows an individual to enter planning factors for an upcoming road trip online and receive a risk assessment.

“It also kicks out a notification e-mail to that individual’s first line leadership to [apprise] them of this upcoming trip,” the admiral noted. “And now that allows the leadership to kick in, engage and have that kneecap-to-kneecap counseling to help an individual optimize his upcoming trip.”

The Navy has been using the TRiPS system, which was purchased from the Army, for more than two years, and so far, Johnson said, it has been a valuable tool in risk management.

“We have better than 58,000 assessments done since we’ve been involved with the program,” Johnson said. “And to the best of our recollection, the best of our data, the Navy has experienced no Class ‘A’ mishaps, no Class ‘A’ fatalities of an individual who is on a TRiPS-assessed trip.”

Military safety officials define a Class “A” accident as one that involves at least \$1 million in damage or that results in death or disabling injury.

Another way the Navy is reminding the fleet about safety and operational readiness is the “101 Critical Days of Summer” safety campaign, which officially kicked off Memorial Day and runs through Labor Day.

Johnson added that the Navy has gone to great efforts to raise situational awareness so each sailor can “know the stats so you don’t become a stat.”

Other initiatives include the “Sailor-to-Sailor Safety” seminar, which uses peer mentorship to communicate safety messages. The Navy has held the first seminar, and now plans to offer them twice a year.

"We had eight sailors from the fleet, around the world, and they came back to the Safety Center to learn the ins and outs of the Safety Center then also to communicate to us on how we can communicate to them better," Johnson said. "And, one of the projects that came out of it was the eight sailors did testimonials about the things that [were] near and dear to their hearts. Some of them had experienced some things firsthand; others had experienced it through their friends."

The video testimonials turned out so well, Johnson added, that officials sent them to all commands in the Navy for their training programs.

Johnson he said that while the Navy encourages sailors to enjoy their off-duty summer activities, officials want each sailor to perform the requisite training first.

"I want to encourage folks just to plan for success, and hurry back to [their] commands, because we need them all back."